

there could hardly be a few outstanding.

He spoke briefly of the principles he had tried to teach:

He taught composition as a tool of self-expression, and quoted Brander Matthews as saying there was no romance in that, that it was a job which had to be done. As to creative writing, while Dr. Baker believed in not hampering the individuality, he asked how many thought they could be really original, and suggested that English teachers should be sane enough to realize that creative writing is for the few.

He taught that literature should be enjoyed with fun, that it should be understood and enjoyed rather than be analyzed, that teachers should show pupils how to have fun with reading.

The following qualities, he said, make a good English teacher: a liberal education, especially in the related fields of art and music; a thorough knowledge of one subject; a fair knowledge of several; catholicity of literary taste, not including Edgar Guest nor specializing in the grotesque or literary jitters in realistic writing; tolerance; good taste and good manners; humor.

He closed by quoting the everyday radio phrase "So long until tomorrow."

While there was a widespread regret at Dr. Baker's retirement and a sense of personal and professional loss, it was exactly fitting that the evening should show only a spirit of gaiety, a quality of happiness and cheer, a flash of keen wits—the only appropriate atmosphere for a gathering of Dr. Baker and his friends.

CARRIE BELLE PARKS

We must have a curriculum which develops people who love liberty, who seek justice, who have devotion to social justice. There is need in the United States for an aroused public opinion in support of education. We have in the support of public education or in the lack of it the destiny of our humanity.—GEORGE D. STRAYER

THE SCHOOL CRISIS

[Don Quixote, waiting for a new deal, was wont to say, "Patience,—and shuffle the cards!" Are teachers merely living up to their reputation for quixotic behavior when they wait patiently while the public learns too late of the tragic starvation of its schools?

Here are facts—authentic facts—from the Federal Office of Education. Will teachers present them to the citizens of their communities?]

Children Without Schools

100,000 additional children are deprived of educational opportunity this fall because of the closing of schools due to lack of funds.

1,659,000 children 6 to 13 years old are not in school in normal years.

521,700 children 14 to 15 years old are without schooling in normal years.

That means a total of 2,280,000 American children of school age, who, according to most compulsory education laws, should be in school, but are not!

Nearly 2,000 rural schools in 24 states failed to open this fall. So far no city public schools are reported closed. Many private and parochial schools are closing. Twenty-four Catholic schools have closed, affecting nearly 3,000 children. Sixteen institutions of higher education have been discontinued since last year. Estimates indicate that 1,500 commercial schools and colleges have closed.

In some communities free public schools have of necessity become tuition schools, admitting only those children whose parents can pay the rate asked. For example, in one town of 15,000 population grade school tuition was reported as \$3 per child per month; high-school tuition \$5.50 per month. In this town at least 200 children whose parents could not pay the tuition charges were being denied an education.

School Terms Shortened

Because of lack of available funds, 1 of

every 4 cities has shortened its school term; 715 rural schools are expected to run less than 3 months. Reductions in school terms make worse an already bad situation. In normal years schools for 1,500,000 children were open six months or less per year.

New reductions of term in city schools have come on the heels of a constant succession of reductions. Terms in practically every great American city are today one or two months shorter than they were 70 to 100 years ago.

Inadequate school terms for American children stand in sharp contrast to the school terms common for children in European countries: United States, 172 days, city, 184 days, rural, 162 days; France, 200 days; Sweden, 210 days; Germany, 246 days; England, 210 days; Denmark, 246 days.

The school term problem is rapidly growing more serious. Prospects for the coming school year reported by some states are: Michigan—90 per cent. of schools will shorten hours; Nebraska—15 per cent. of schools will cut at least one month; Missouri—100 high schools, 1,500 rural schools face early closing; New Mexico—most schools will have shortened terms; Virginia—many terms will be shortened unless emergency measures are taken.

Low Salaries of Teachers Going Lower

Most people have a vague idea that teachers' salaries are low. Few know how low they are. Almost no one realizes how low they have gone by comparison with other standards. For example: An unskilled factory worker laboring for a year at the minimum "blanket code" rate would receive \$728, which is little enough. One of every 4 American teachers is now teaching at a rate of less than \$750 per year.

Prospects for early closing of schools make it possible to predict that 1 of every 3 teachers will this year receive for expert services less than \$750; 210,000 rural teachers (about one half) will receive less than \$750; more than 40,000 rural teachers will

receive less than \$450. One of every 13 Negro teachers receives \$25 per month or less. In at least 18 states some teachers are being paid in warrants which are cashable at discounts ranging from 5 per cent.

Recent State Reports on Teachers' Salaries—1932-33

Arizona: Reduced 20 to 40 per cent. Additional reductions probable this year. Teachers have lost 10 per cent. in discounting warrants.

Colorado: Reductions range from 5 to 20 per cent. More lost through discounting warrants.

Illinois: Reduced at least 10 per cent. and will be reduced more. Much loss from discounting warrants.

Iowa: One half of all teachers (1933-34) will receive \$750 per year or less; legal minimums now \$40 per month.

Kansas: Reduced perhaps to the extent of 30 per cent.

Louisiana: Reduced 10 to 40 per cent—average 20 per cent.

Michigan: Have been reduced and will be reduced as much as 60 per cent. unless more aid is provided. Warrants have brought additional losses.

Missouri: One teacher in four in rural communities taught last year from 1 to 4 months without pay. Three-fourths of elementary teachers will receive less this year than the "blanket code" minimum for unskilled factory labor. Ten per cent. of rural teachers have contracted to teach for less than \$320 this year; 97 per cent. will receive less than \$728.

Nebraska: Salaries reduced 40 per cent.

Oklahoma: Salaries reduced approximately 24 per cent. Great difficulties because of unpaid warrants.

Tennessee: Salaries down 25 per cent. this year.

Virginia: Practically all reduced 20 per cent.

Washington: Average reduction 20 per cent.

Curtailed School Services

Due to lack of available funds schools have been compelled to drop overboard services of long recognized value in building better citizens. Here is what happened in about 700 typical cities: 67 reduced art instruction—36 eliminated it; 110 reduced the music program—29 eliminated it; 81 reduced the physical education work—28 eliminated it; 65 reduced home economics work—19 eliminated it; 58 reduced industrial art instruction—24 eliminated it; 89 reduced health service—22 eliminated it.

One of every two cities has had to reduce or eliminate one or more services by which the schools have been helping future Americans to be healthier, to be abler homemakers, more competent contributors to the life of their communities and more intelligent users of the new leisure.

More Children—Fewer Teachers

Approximately 200,000 certified teachers are unemployed; 18,600 fewer teachers, it is estimated, are employed in city schools today than in 1931. Thousands more have been dismissed from private schools and colleges. Small percentages of graduates of teacher-training institutions are finding positions.

If we decided to operate city schools today with the same number of pupils to a teacher that we had in 1930, it would be necessary to hire more than 26,000 additional teachers.

If we decided to provide education for the 2,280,000 children 6 to 15 years of age not now in school, it would be necessary to add 76,000 teachers.

Thus, if the United States were really determined to give all its children the minimum essentials of a modern education, it would be necessary to engage one half of all certificated teachers now unemployed. Businesses that increase take on more help. School enrolment has increased more than a million since 1930—but the number of teachers, city and rural, decreased more

than 30,000. Teachers are unemployed, but classes grow larger. One state has 44 pupils per teacher. The average for five states is more than 40. Teachers are unemployed, despite the fact that more than 1,500,000 children will this year be taught six months or less.

More Children—Less Money

Seven hundred twenty-eight thousand more children were enrolled in high school in 1932 than in 1930; 115,000 fewer children were enrolled in elementary school in 1932 than in 1930 (the first decrease in the history of the country). Net gain: 613,000 pupils. This is more than the entire population of Montana. It is more than the combined populations of Atlanta, Des Moines and Salt Lake City. It is more than were enrolled in all our public high schools in 1900. Today 93 of every 100 city children enroll in high school; 55 of every 100 rural children do likewise.

Abolition of child labor in industry by the NRA will, it is estimated, put another 100,000 children on the high school doorstep. In one small Southern town it added 137 pupils.

Any industry faced with rapid increase in business would expect an increase in total operating costs. But schools, forced to carry an increased burden, are required to carry on with less funds.

Our nation's schools are endeavoring to give adequate instruction to an army of pupils increased since 1930 by more than 1,000,000 pupils on funds decreased about \$368,000,000. Both city and rural school current expenses have been cut about 20 per cent. since 1930, it is estimated. To teach approximately 25,000,000 public school pupils the United States three years ago spent \$10,700,000 for current expenses per school day. This year the schools are teaching a larger number of children on \$8,600,000 per school day, a decrease of \$2,100,000 per day.

Per capita cost of current expense for

public education in cities was cut 22 per cent. from 1932 to 1933. This has been accomplished by slashing salaries, delaying needed repairs, cutting down on supplies and text books, eliminating important services, crowding classes, shortening terms.

There never was such a demand for educational opportunity as there is today in the United States. Because of more children and less money it has never been so difficult to satisfy that demand.

Debts

Two hundred fifty-nine school districts in 29 states have had to default on their indebtedness. In Florida 64 school districts have defaulted; North Carolina, 18; Michigan, 15; Ohio, 34; South Dakota, 15.

Some cities, compelled to refinance, have had to pay 6 per cent. instead of 4 per cent. interest, which was the former rate. School districts are thus paying high interest to bond and warrant holders while the teachers who actually do the work of instructing the coming generation often go unpaid!

To pay teachers when there was no cash available, school districts issued interest-bearing warrants. Total unpaid warrants—\$40,000,000.

One state increased its payments of interest alone on its school debts from \$7,000,000 to \$10,000,000 between 1930 and 1932. Paying this huge sum for interest diminishes the amount of money available to help hard-pressed schools for instruction services this year. In 1933-34, from school funds, \$150,000,000 will have to be paid adults for interest on warrants and bonds. Not \$1 of that sum can be used for teaching children.

Reasons for Lack of Money to Support Schools

Schools are the most completely local of American public services. To support them the most completely local source of income—real estate (farms, homes, stores, factories, etc.)—has been taxed.

Depression, crushing real estate values, is in turn crushing education.

(1) *Tax delinquencies:* In some school districts 30 to 40 per cent. of taxes on property have not been paid. Michigan tax delinquencies are estimated at \$100,000,000 last year. Missouri—\$13,800,000 school taxes delinquent.

(2) *Lower assessments:* The fact that assessments are usually made every four years kept the rate of income for schools up for a time. When new assessments now coming through cut property values by half, school income drops by half automatically.

(3) *Mortgage problems:* Farm incomes decreased; wages dropped during the depression; mortgages on farms and homes remained stationary. This changed the paying of interest on mortgages from a relatively minor charge to an overwhelming burden and contributed to tax delinquency.

(4) *Differences in wealth:* A school tax of \$10 on every \$1,000 of tangible property would produce \$58 per child in one state and \$457 per child in another state. The average cost per pupil attending school in 1930 was \$86.69. Thus the burden of supporting schools on a property tax in a rich state is only one-eighth as heavy as it is for a poor state.

(5) *Tax limitations:* To help hard-pressed home and farm owners many states (for example: Michigan, Texas, Arkansas, West Virginia) passed laws which result in limiting the amount which may be raised by taxes on property and therefore limiting the amount a community can raise to support its schools.

(6) *School funds in closed banks:* \$15,000,000 in school funds is frozen in the closed banks of a single state.

Thus many schools are being ground between two millstones; former sources of income will not yield enough money to run the schools; state laws forbid increasing taxes to yield the amount necessary to run the schools.

Blocked in attempts to support schools from local sources of wealth, school patrons have turned to state governments for funds. What do they find? New sources of income are, by federal and state agreement, devoted to the all-important function of relief. Other state funds are being advanced with federal funds for roads, public works, etc. When school patrons arrive the state treasury cupboard is bare.

The Experience of Other Countries

The Office of Education has recently received reports on school conditions, as influenced by the world-wide depression, from practically all countries. Following are brief excerpts from the forthcoming Bulletin, 1933, No. 14, "The Effects of the Economic Depression on Education in Other Countries," by Dr. James F. Abel, chief, division of foreign school systems.

Canada: Our neighbor to the north reports reductions in salaries, larger enrolments.

Mexico: "Renewed activity and plans for more rapid development." Thousands of new Mexican rural schools have been established in the last 10 years.

Australia: "No schools have been unnecessarily closed, many classes are increased in size, and standards of instruction and attendance are being maintained. Increased amounts are spent on, (1) books for children whose parents can not supply them, (2) conveyance for children living more than 3 miles from school, and (3) correspondence instruction of children in sparsely settled areas."

England and Wales: "Lowered teachers' salaries are not regarded as permanent; . . . growth of junior secondary schools was remarkable; adult education continued to expand; . . . erection of more beautiful, effective and better school buildings; and more equitable arrangements for secondary school fees was adopted."

Irish Free State: "The educational situation is continuing to improve."

New Zealand: "No public and only a few private schools have closed."

Scotland: "The school system is highly developed and well established. It has not been vitally damaged by the depression."

Belgium: "The education system maintained its high level."

Denmark: "With the exception of holding building and repair work to a minimum, the school system of Denmark is pursuing its normal course."

France: "No adverse effects of the depression have been manifest in the schools."

Chile: "The reported financial curtailments in Chile seem very heavy, but it is stated that the schools are functioning in much their normal way."

In Europe, up to the present school year, the public education systems that have been little or not seriously affected are Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, France, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg and Switzerland.

A canvass of the countries of the world reveals that schools in the United States have not been safeguarded from the impact of the depression as well as schools in most other nations.

At no time in our history was there greater need for the influence of education upon our future citizens. It goes without saying that at this critical period, it would be a great mistake to weaken the services of any of our educational institutions. On the other hand they should be strengthened, no matter what the drain may be. Let the watchword be therefore—not only will we not permit them to fall back in their educational services, but we will, in spite of the demands upon us, do what we humanly can to improve them.

—*Toledo Sunday Times.*

Honour and shame from no condition rise,
Act wise your part, there all the Honour
lies.—*Pope.*